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Directorate of
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21 March 1991

Focus	Iran-Lebanon: Playing Politics With Western Hostages	b3	Page
	Key players in the Lebanon hostage situation may try to turn regional developments to their own advantage, but no side has made concessions, and a near-term breakthrough appears doubtful. We believe Iranian President Rafsanjani has enough political capital to override hardline opposition to further releases. He will move cautiously, however, to avoid appearing to knuckle under to the massive Western military presence in the Persian Gulf.	b3	1
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Chronology of Terrorism—1991
Counterterrorist Center

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Terrorism Review b3

21 March 1991

Focus

Iran-Lebanon: Playing Politics With Western Hostages b3

Key players involved in the Lebanon hostage situation may attempt to turn fast-breaking regional developments to their own advantage, but there are no concrete indications that a breakthrough is imminent. No side has made concessions so far, and most players are looking for hints of flexibility in others. Iranian President Rafsanjani, who finds the continued detention of Western hostages an impediment to Iran's efforts to expand its regional security role, may view this as an opportune time to test US and Israeli flexibility on the hostage issue. Recent actions by Syria and the new Lebanese Government also appear to be increasing the pressure on Hizballah, and the group almost certainly is nervous about possible renewed efforts to secure a hostage release. b3

Iran: Testing the Waters?

We believe that President Rafsanjani is continuing to work toward a resolution of the hostage issue, but he must move carefully to avoid a backlash from hardline elements within Iran and Hizballah. According to press reports, Iran is offering assistance in securing freedom for the Western hostages in exchange for US pressure on Israel to release Shaykh Ubayd—abducted from southern Lebanon by Israel Defense Forces (IDF) in July 1989. Iran will also continue to demand the release of Lebanese prisoners held by the Israeli-controlled Army of South Lebanon. Tehran may continue to seek the release of four Iranians abducted by the Lebanese Forces militia in 1982. The resolution of the Ubayd issue and settlements favorable to Tehran at the US-Iran claims tribunal at The Hague, however, significantly reduce the salience of this issue as a legitimate demand. b3

It is doubtful that Tel Aviv would agree to free Shaykh Ubayd without securing the release of Ron Arad, a navigator shot down over Lebanon in 1986, and other IDF personnel who are missing in action.

The seven-month confrontation between Washington and Baghdad—and hard-line opposition to dealing with the United States during that period—probably dissuaded Rafsanjani from moving forward on the hostage issue. Although we believe Rafsanjani has the political capital necessary to override the protests of hardliners, he probably was concerned about criticism from them. The continued presence of a large number of US troops in Saudi Arabia suggests that

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a near-term release is unlikely, because Tehran would not want to be perceived as negotiating from a position of weakness. In addition, Iran may be waiting to see what offers Washington makes at the next round of negotiations at The Hague. Tehran has long sought to link the release of frozen assets to the hostages.

British Attempts To Free Their Hostages

Britain's recent decision to deport Mehrdad Kokabi, an Iranian charged in connection with a bomb attack on a bookstore selling *The Satanic Verses*, helps Rafsanjani by removing an issue used by hardliners to argue against the release of Western hostages. Unfortunately, it also reinforces Tehran's view that Washington, like London, eventually will strike a deal favorable to Iran. The British press is speculating that Kokabi's release may help secure freedom for the British hostages in Beirut, but we do not think Iran will play all its cards at once.

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The Hostage Holders: Feeling Pressured?

The recent activities of other players in Lebanon almost certainly are making Hizballah nervous about renewed efforts to secure the release of the Western hostages.

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Syria appears to be increasing its efforts to resolve the hostage issue. Syrian Vice President Khaddam publicly stated that the subject was raised with Tehran during Foreign Minister Velayati's trip to Damascus in early March. The issue was also discussed during a visit to Damascus by Iran's Vice President Hassan Habibi. Although Syria would like to take credit for resolving the hostage problem, it generally has played only a small role, if any, in previous releases.

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Outlook

The last two hostages who have been freed were held by Imad Mughnayih's Islamic Jihad Organization (IJO). Mughnayih most likely would resent Iranian efforts to secure the release of another IJO hostage at this time, viewing any such request as an Iranian effort to draw down his pool of hostages first.

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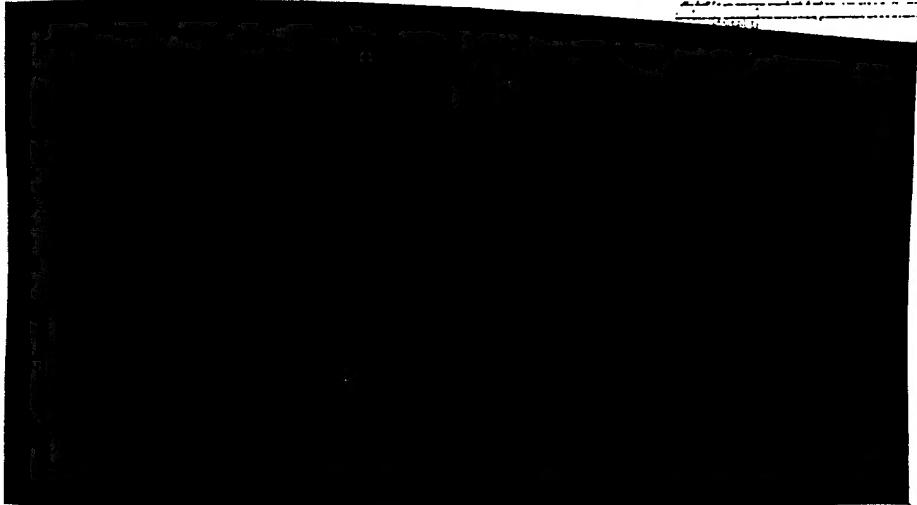
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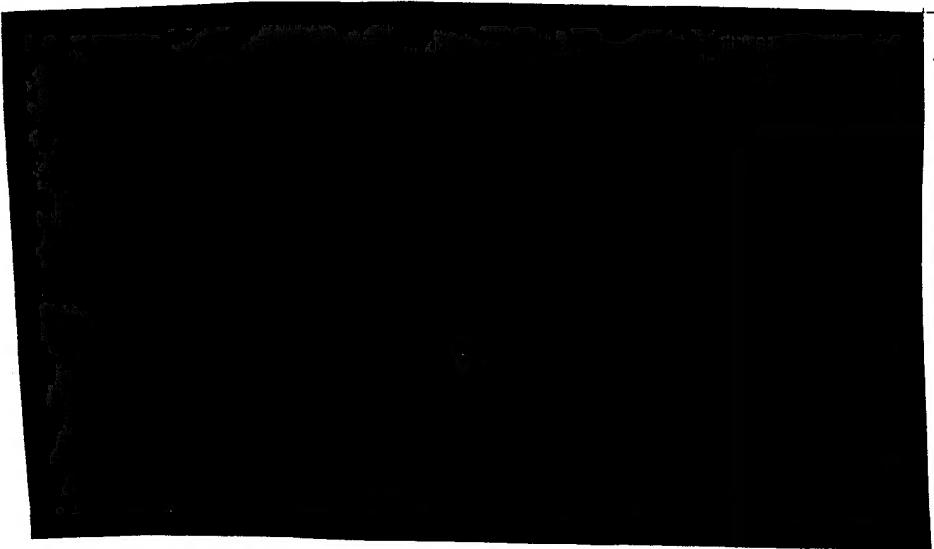
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Middle East

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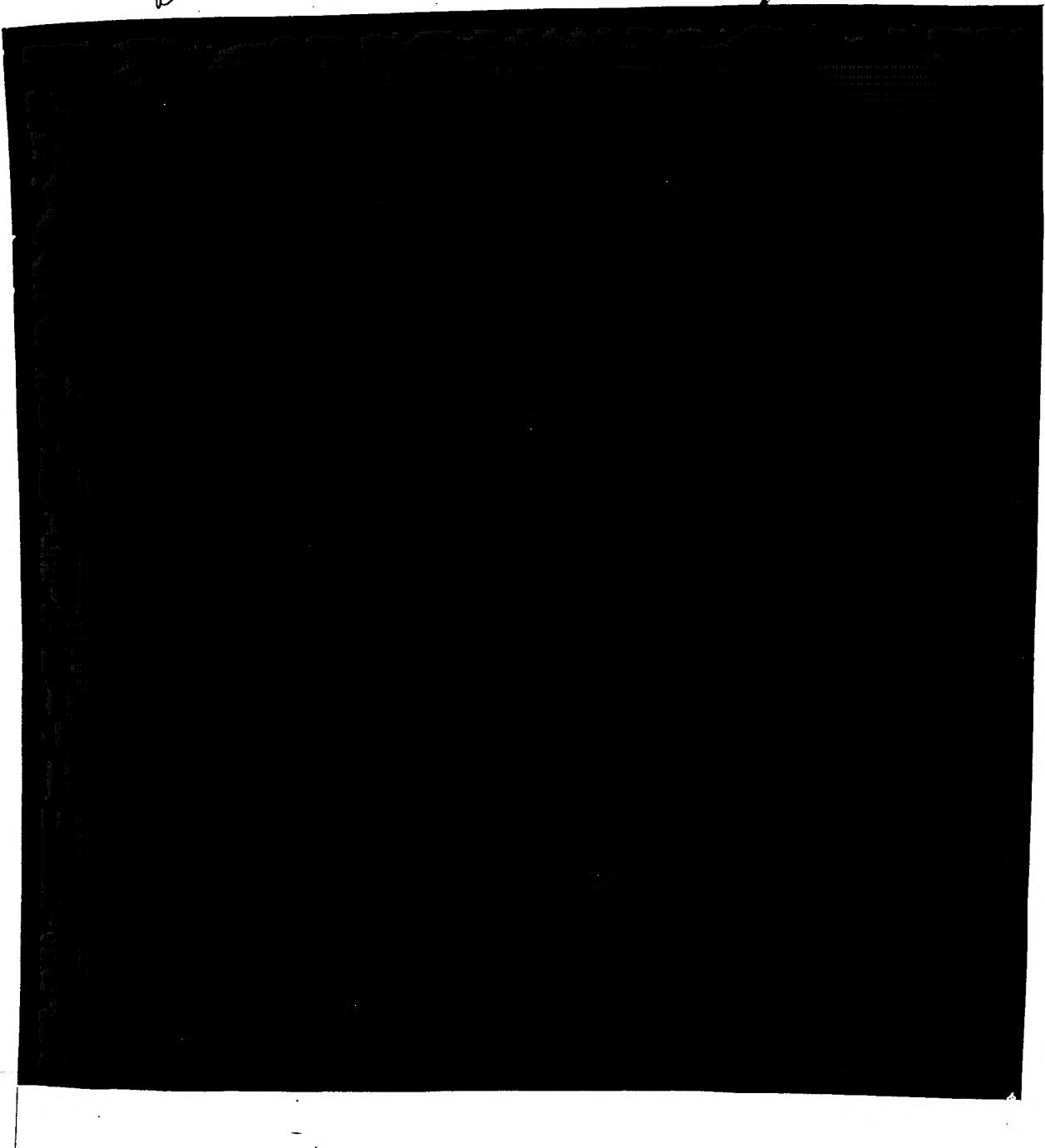
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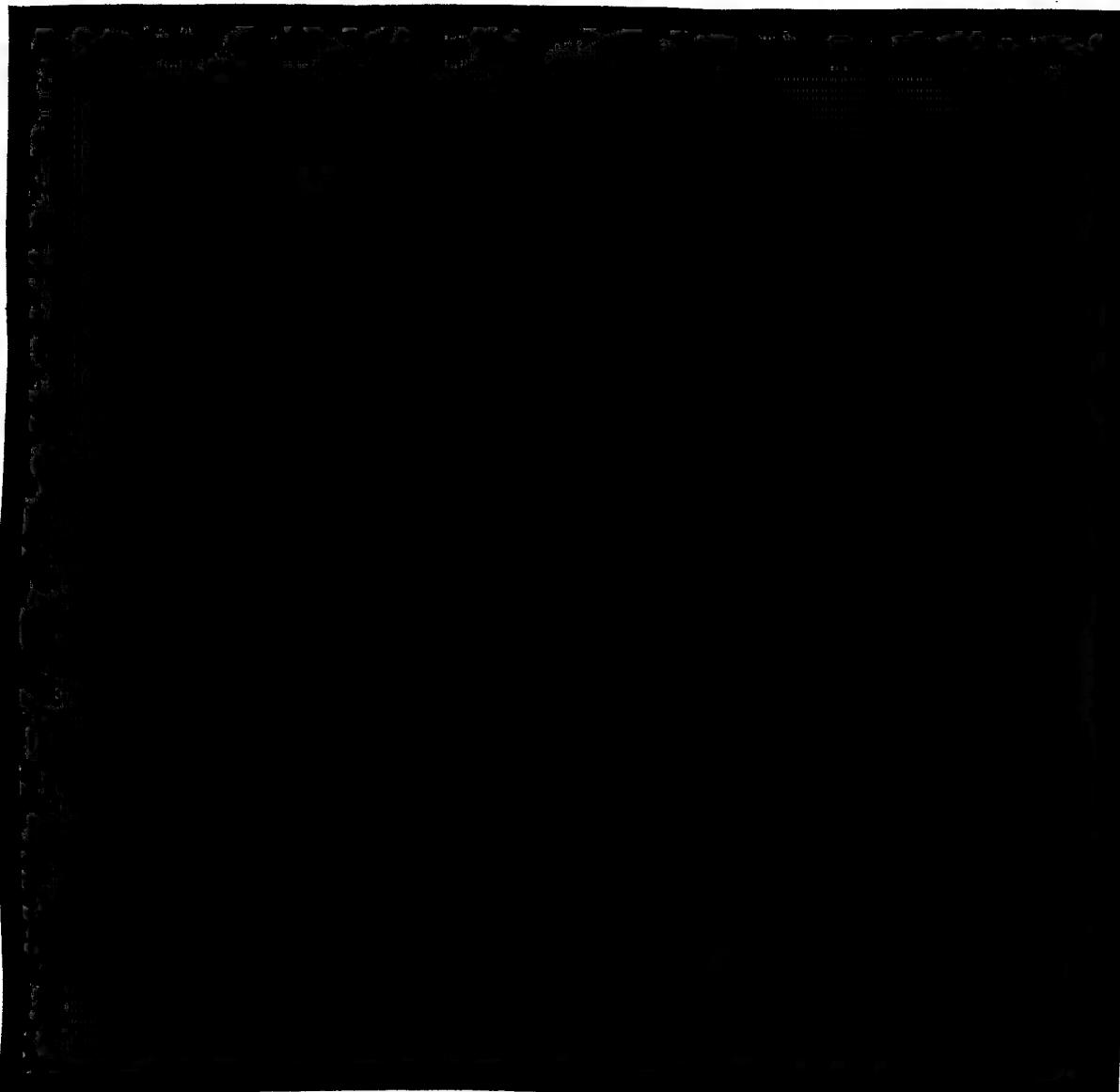
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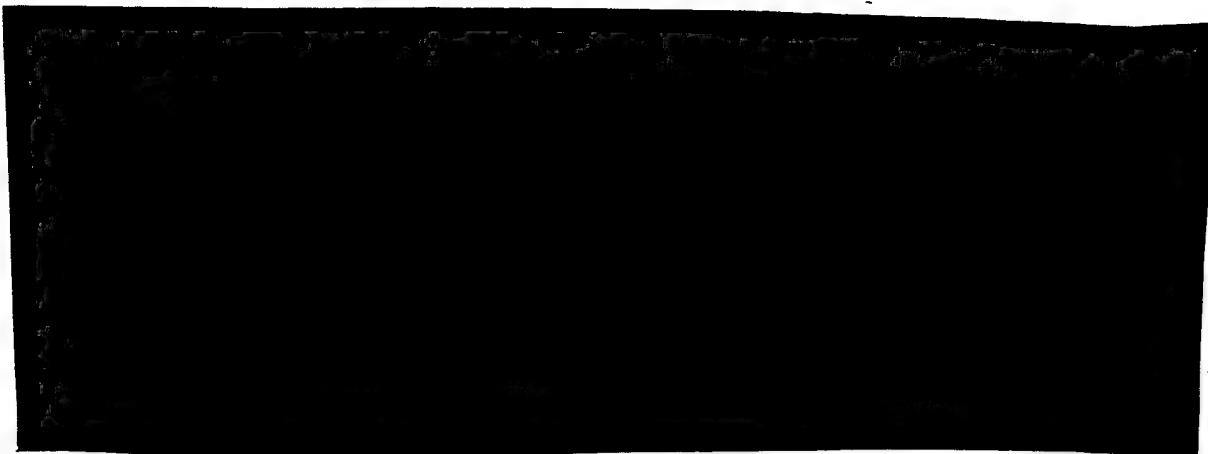
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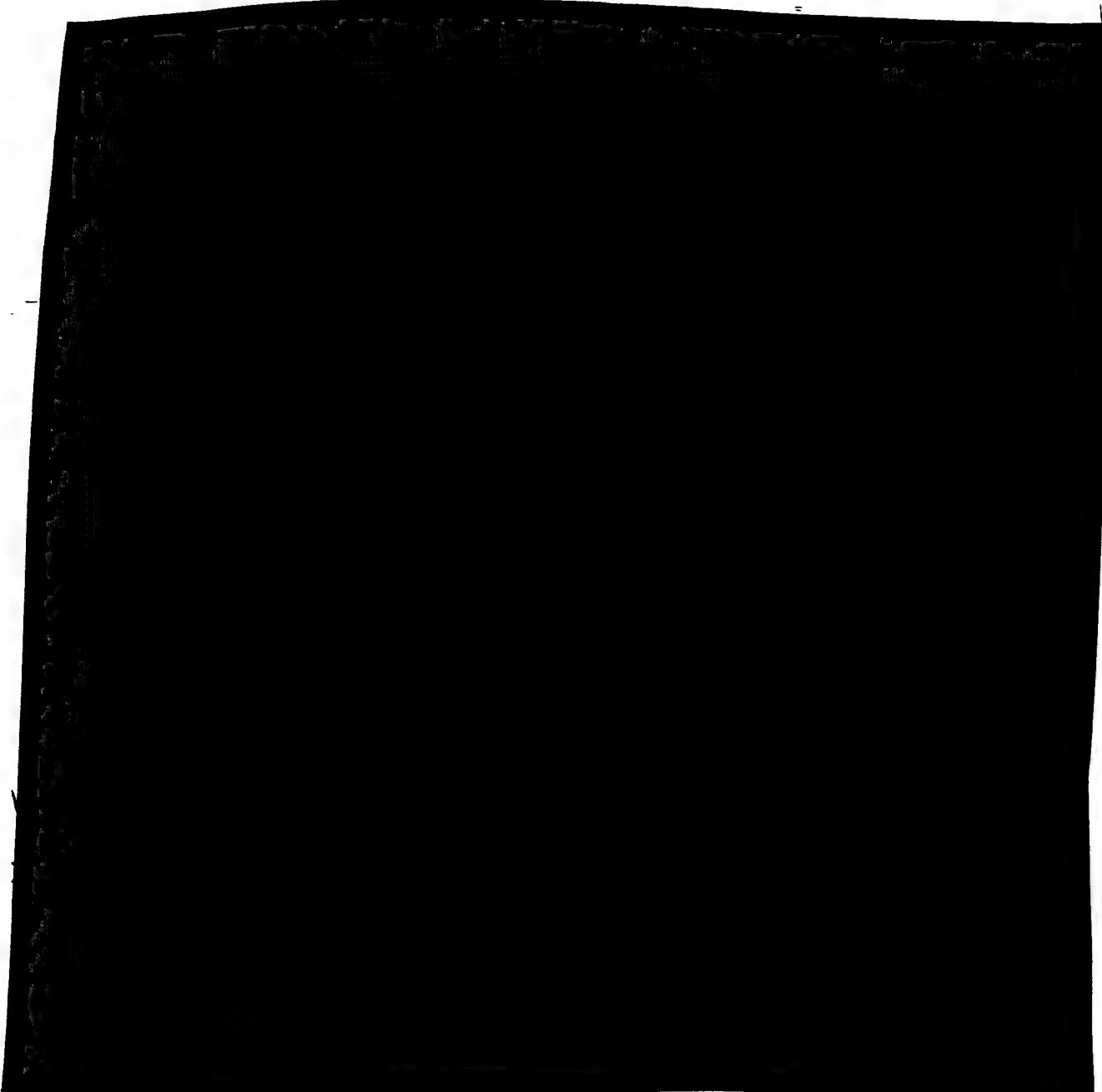
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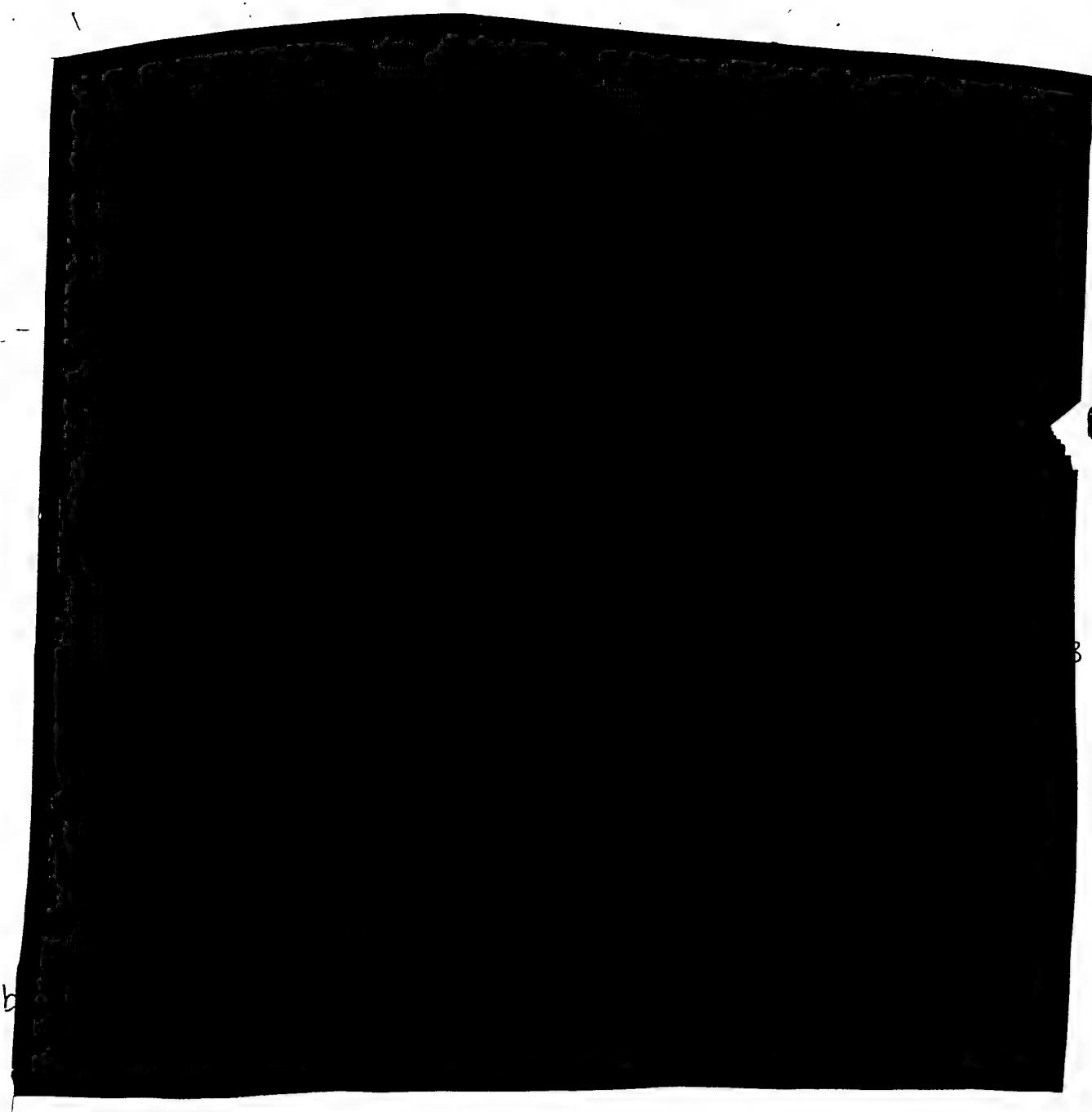
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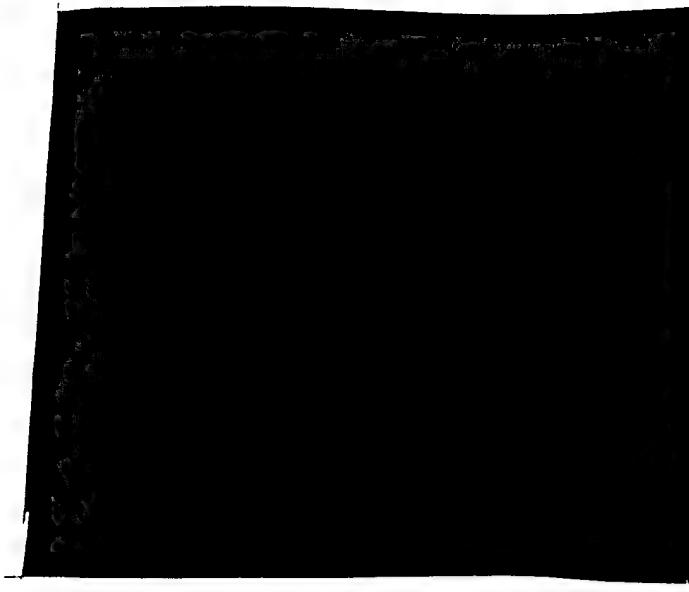
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The Terrorism Diary for May b3

Below is a compendium of May dates of known or conceivable significance to terrorists around the world. Our inclusion of a date or event should not by itself be construed to suggest that we expect or anticipate a commemorative terrorist event. b3

1 May

El Salvador. The first week of May contains several dates important to leftwing and rightwing elements; consequently, political violence tends to peak during this period.

Socialist World. May Day (commemorates labor violence in Chicago).

1 May 1980

Peru. Destruction of electoral material in Chuschi, Cangallo Province, marks the beginning of the armed struggle by Sendero Luminoso; the anniversary is commemorated by acts of violence throughout May, but especially on 16 May.

2 May

Islamic World. Quds Day or Jerusalem Day—Muslims protest Israeli occupation of Jerusalem.

Jewish World. Commemoration of the Holocaust.

2 May 1953

Jordan. King Husayn assumes Constitutional power.

3 May 1986

Sri Lanka. An Air Lanka jetliner is bombed by Tamil separatists at the Colombo airport; 16 persons killed, 40 others wounded.

4 May

Israel. Independence Day.

4 May 1978

Namibia. Kasinga Day (commemorates the raid by South African forces that left hundreds dead).

4 May 1986

Japan. Chukaku-ha (Nucleus Faction) fires five homemade rockets at the opening of the economic summit; no casualties.

5 May 1862

Mexico. Cinco de Mayo (commemorates victory over forces of Napoleon III).

5 May 1941

Ethiopia. Liberation Day.

5 May 1945

Netherlands. Liberation Day.

5 May 1955

Germany. West Germany becomes a member of NATO.

5 May 1981

Northern Ireland. Death of Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) member Bobby Sands in a hunger strike.

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6 May 1900 *Iran.* Birthday of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

8 May 1945 *Czechoslovakia.* Liberation Day.

8 May 1945 *Germany.* Capitulation of the Third Reich.

8 May 1984 *Libya.* Armed dissidents attack Qadhafi's Aziziyah barracks.

9 May 1881 *Romania.* Independence Day.

9 May 1945 *Albania.* Victory Day.

9 May 1945 *Poland.* Victory Day.

9 May 1945 *USSR.* Victory Day.

9 May 1945 *Yugoslavia.* Victory Day.

9 May 1976 *West Germany.* Suicide in prison of Ulrike Meinhof, the founding member of the Red Army Faction (RAF).

10 May *Jordan.* Arab Resistance Day.

10 May *Israel.* Independence Day.

10 May 1985 *India.* Night of Sikh bombings leaves 80 dead, 200 wounded in New Delhi and other cities.

14 May 1811 *Paraguay.* Independence Day.

14 May 1948 *Israel.* Independence declared.

14 May 1948 *Middle East.* Beginning of the first Arab-Israeli war.

15 May 1948 *Palestinians.* Palestine Day (end of UN mandate); the 15 May Organization founded in 1979 by a remnant of the Special Operations Group of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) takes its name from this event.

16 May 1983 *Sudan.* Founding of Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the Liberation Movement (SPLM).

17 May 1814 *Norway.* Constitution Day.

17 May 1983 *Lebanon, Israel.* Signing of the troop withdrawal accord (known as the 17 May agreement).

18 May 1980 *South Korea.* Civilian uprising against military rule; usually marked by student demonstrations.

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18 May 1981 *Northern Ireland.* Death of PIRA hunger striker Raymond McCreech.

19 May 1890 *Vietnam.* Ho Chi Minh's birthday.

19 May 1895 *Cuba.* Death of Jose Marti.

20 May 1972 *Sri Lanka.* Republic Day.

23 May 1949 *West Germany.* Proclamation of the federal republic.

23 May 1951 *China.* Tibet is declared to be under Chinese sovereignty.

24 May *Buddhist World.* Birthday of Gautama Buddha.

25 May 1810 *Argentina.* Beginning of the revolution against Spain.

25 May 1892 *Yugoslavia.* Birthday of Josip Broz Tito.

25 May 1923 *Jordan.* Independence Day.

25 May 1946 *Jordan.* Constitutional monarchy is established.

25 May 1963 *Africa.* African Freedom Day; Day of Africa (founding of Organization of African Unity).

25 May 1965 *Colombia.* Founding of the Communist Party of Colombia/Marxist-Leninist, the parent organization of the terrorist group People's Liberation Army.

25 May 1967 *Bermuda.* Bermuda Day (Constitution is adopted).

26 May 1966 *Guyana.* Independence Day.

27 May *Israel.* Jerusalem Day.

28 May 1983 *France, French Caribbean.* Caribbean Revolutionary Alliance (ARC) surfaces with 17 coordinated bombings.

30 May 1961 *Dominican Republic.* Liberty Day (assassination of Gen. Raphael Trujillo).

30 May 1967 *Nigeria.* Declaration of independence by Biafra.

30 May 1981 *Bangladesh.* Assassination of Ziaur Rahman.

31 May 1910 *South Africa.* Union Day (four provinces merged to form the Union of South Africa).

31 May 1961 *South Africa.* Proclamation of the republic.

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~~Secret~~Chronology of Terrorism—1991 *b3*

Below are described selected noteworthy foreign and international events involving terrorists or the use of terrorist tactics. These events have occurred or come to light since our last issue. In some cases, the perpetrators and their motivations may not be known. Events and developments that have already been described elsewhere in this publication are not included. *b3*

Europe

15 February

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Greece: Two bombs detonate under vehicles belonging to a French national and a Greek businessman, probably taken for an American, in Aya Paraskevi. No group has claimed responsibility. *b3*

16 February

Spain: A car bomb explodes at the Malaga prison gate, injuring the Warden's wife. The Basque Fatherland and Liberty is suspected. *b3*

17 February

Northern Ireland: Twelve Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA) terrorists attack a British Army checkpoint near Cranreggan with machinegun fire and mortar rounds. The mortar rounds failed to explode. *b3*

18 February

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Yugoslavia: Three molotov cocktails are thrown at the USIS center in Sarajevo. No group has claimed responsibility. *b3*

21 February

Spain: A bomb damages a joint US-Spanish oil pipeline in Cordoba. The One October Anti-Fascist Resistance Group claimed responsibility. *b3*

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Latin America

-23 February -

Brazil: An explosive device is found outside a Porto Alegre synagogue.

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Peru: Three Mormon chapels are attacked with dynamite charges in Ica. Propaganda left at the scene mentioned the Gulf war.

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25 February

Guatemala: A bomb is defused outside the home of the Japanese Ambassador. No group claimed responsibility.

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27 February

Venezuela: A pipe bomb is discovered at a McDonald's restaurant in Caracas. No group claimed responsibility.

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28 February

Guatemala: The Canadian Embassy is the target of a drive by shooting in Guatemala City. Property damage was slight.

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2 March

Peru: Four Mormon chapels are bombed in Chiclayo. One Mormon official was slightly injured, but damage was slight.

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3 March

Chile: Two Mormon chapels are bombed and another burned in Santiago. Anti-American slogans relating to the Gulf war were painted on the front of the chapels.

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Middle East

5 March

Kuwait: A bomb explodes at the US Embassy, causing no injuries or damage.

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7 March

Yemen: Two handgrenades explode at the residence of a British employee of the Yemen-Hunt oil company in Al Hudaydah, causing no injuries or damage.

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South Asia

18 March

A bomb ripped through a bazaar in Sheikhupura, Pakistan, injuring 13 people. No group claimed responsibility.

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A bomb exploded in a restaurant in New Delhi, India, killing at least one person. Sikh militants were believed responsible because the restaurant was owned by a Hindu family from the Punjab.

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